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202 We had not gone very far before our party began to whoop a Nosu war-whoop. The sound was of great volume, and had it suddenly burst out during the night on the peaceful sleepers of a Chinese village one can easily imagine how startled and frightened the people there would be. The whoop of our men was soon answered from some of the hills near by. A party of hillmen had been bringing great coffin boards from the interior and as they were climbing the hill on their return journey they answered the shout of our men. I was told that different clans have different whoops, and that messages are conveyed by means of these hill shouts. Sometimes a keen note of derision is put into the whoop. All the Orientals are past masters in deriding or cursing an adversary.

311 The no-man's-land we passed through was covered with long jungle grass as tall as one's neck. There was not a sign of cultivation anywhere. Formerly on this land there dwelt four thousand Chinese families, and we were shown a site where there used to be held a very busy market. Cotton, sugar-cane, sweet potatoes, etc., were largely cultivated. Later on there was a quarrel between two Nosu chiefs in the neighbourhood and constant fights between the two. In their long quarrel they cleared out all the Chinese, driving them across the river. It seemed a great pity that such a great stretch of valuable land should lie waste when south of the river there were multitudes of people who with great difficulty managed to get enough to keep body and soul together.

152 137 We were considerably troubled by a kind of grass which has a barbed spike on it. These little spikes work their way through any clothing and enter the flesh almost as if they

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were insects. As they enter the flesh they act like fish-hooks, and are pulled out with difficulty. One of these thorns entered the arm of one of the men. After he had extracted it he wished to show his anger to the thorn and proceeded to bite it in two. But in this angry process he came off second best, for the thorn entered his tongue and gave him a lot of pain. It was at last extracted with a pair of small tweezers I had in my pocket-knife.

As we travelled along, all on the qui vive, Mr Long described how robbers quiet any man they may succeed in capturing. To prevent his calling out to any companions who may be near they thrust a stone into his mouth, and tie this around with a girdle. The gag is most effective. After a few miles we left the debatable land which lay by the Yangtse, and, turning to the right, went inland. For some distance we followed the course of a silvery stream. The waters were sparkling and very beautiful, but the road was execrable. Sometimes it was just a few ledges cut in the face of a rock. At other times it was a big log placed against a rock. By means of a few notches cut in the log we had to climb up. Again rough trees were stretched from ledge to ledge in a cliff, and over these we had to climb. We felt very glad that we had not brought our horses, for they could never have faced the roads we walked or climbed over—not that these horses are not able to face rough roads. I have a pony now which will face almost anything that one finds on the rough roads of China. Places that I walk over with difficulty he will carry me over without a shake or a refusal. Sometimes he seems as if he were half goat. I have known him go up a cliff that I had to negotiate in some places on all-fours. But tree-climbing is too much for even an old, well-tried, clever horse.

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the blacksmith, a sturdy, fine, good-natured Devonian. He, however, could shoe a horse better than he could draw a tooth. I wanted two extracted. The first troubler of Israel came out all right. The second did not. So the friendly blacksmith charged only for one, sixpence instead of a shilling.

The pluckiest person for having teeth extracted whom I have ever come across was an aboriginal woman living among these West China hills. She came to me one Sunday, begging me to help her out of her trouble by pulling some of her teeth. I got her to open her mouth and tell me which she wished extracted. She replied to my inquiry by saying: "The one at the back, teacher, all of them." I started with number one at the back, and it came out cleanly. The old lady did not wince nor cry. She merely said: "That is splendid. It makes you feel comfortable. Now the next, teacher." Out came number two. No wincing; no crying; just the remark: "That is splendid. It makes you feel comfortable." The same after number three came out, and also the same after number four was extracted. When number five came out the dear, brave old soul, with her mouth covered with blood, said: "Thank you, teacher. It does not hurt a bit, and it does make one feel comfortable." She opened her mouth for still another, but I backed out. I was jolly uncomfortable if the old lady was not. When I remembered how I had shaken and trembled when I visited a certain room in Finsbury Pavement, London, I realised what a great amount of pluck this hillwoman had.

Talking about the teeth has made one, as it always does, forget everything else. We must return to the spring by the hill-side where we were eating the buckwheat cakes and the sword-cut pork.